

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION SS-30

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FM AMEMBASSY DACCA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2821

INFO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L DACCA 1795

EXDIS

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP

SUBJ: INVITATION TO SECRETARY TO VISIT DACCA

1. A HOPE THAT YOU WILL BE ABLE TO ACCEPT BANGLADESH GOVERNMENT'S INVITATION TO VISIT DACCA AS PART OF YOUR VISIT TO SUBCONTINENT THIS SUMMER, AND I THINK A GOOD CASE CAN BE MADE FOR YOU TO DO SO. NOTHING WOULD MORE CONVINCINGLY WIPE OUT ANY VESTIGES OF "TILT" THAT MAY LINGER IN BENGALEE MINDS; IT WOULD SUPPORT BANGLADESH'S EFFORTS TO EMPHASIZE A MORE BALANCED RELATIONSHIP WITH MAJOR POWERS, EFFORTS WHICH ARE CONSISTENT WITH OUR OWN OBJECTIVES; AND I THINK IT COULD BE USED TO ENCOURAGE MUJIB FURTHER ALONG HIS CONCILIATORY COURSE IN HIS RELATIONS WITH PAKISTAN. YOUR VISIT WOULD ALSO BE IMPORTANT TO MUJIB AS IT WOULD DO A GREAT DEAL FOR HIS STATURE AT A TIME WHEN HE IS BEGINNING TO HAVE SIGNIFICANT PROBLEMS WITH HIS DOMESTIC SUPPORT.

2. IT HAS BEEN POINTED OUT TO ME THAT SUCH A VISIT MIGHT NOT BE AN UNALLOYED BLESSING IN THE SENSE THAT IT MIGHT AROUSE EXAGGERATED EXPECTATIONS THAT CORNUCOPIA OF US AID WAS NOW ABOUT TO OPEN STILL FURTHER AND THAT WE ARE SIGNALLING A NEW INTEREST IN BANGLADESH WHICH IMPLIED THAT WE COULD BE RELIED UPON TO GUARANTEE BANGLADESH'S SALVATION, A DANGER WHICH THE LOW PROFILE WE HAVE SO FAR ADOPTED IN DACCA PRESUMABLY HELPS TO AVOID. THE POINT IS
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ALSO MADE THAT BENGALLEES WILL EXPECT YOU TO COME BEARING AN

IMMEDIATE GIFT OR GIFTS, MUCH AS YOUR VISIT TO INDIA MAY BE SEEN IN CONTEXT OF IMMINENT NEW AID RELATIONSHIP THERE. THESE POINTS UNDOUBTEDLY HAVE SOME VALIDITY AND MEAN AT LEAST THAT WE SHOULD NOT TRY TO OVERSELL THE VIRTUES OF A VISIT HERE. ADMITTEDLY OUR INTERESTS IN DACCA ARE LIMITED AND THERE WOULD BE FEW REWARDS FOR YOU IN ANY IMPORTANT STRATEGIC SENSE, BUT YOUR VISIT WOULD BE A VERY DECENT GESTURE TO A LONG-SUFFERING PEOPLE WHO HAVE, I FIND, A LARGE FUND OF GOOD WILL TOWARD THE UNITED STATES WHATEVER THEIR CONCEPTION OF OUR POSTURE AT THE TIME OF THEIR INDEPENDENCE STRUGGLE. AND I THINK THAT YOUR VISIT WOULD BE SEEN AS A VALUABLE POLITICAL GIFT IN AND OF ITSELF SO THAT WE SHOULD NOT BE OVERLY CONCERNED ABOUT EXPECTATIONS OF FURTHER "GIFTS." IN ANY CASE, WE ARE GOING TO HAVE TO GET PRETTY GOOD AT SAYING NO TO BENGAL REQUESTS FOR MORE AID, WHETHER YOU COME TO DACCA OR NOT.

3. IN SUM, WE THINK THE PLUSES WILL EXCEED ANY POSSIBLE MINUSES AND WE HOPE THAT YOUR SCHEDULE WILL PERMIT A STOP IN DACCA, EVEN IF IT SHOULD HAVE TO BE A BRIEF ONE.
BOSTER

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